

7770

Bishop *Hall's* Portraiture

k OF A

TRUE CHRISTIAN.

In Twelve SECTIONS.

CONTAINING,

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| I. His Disposition. | VII. His Resolutions in |
| II. His Expence of the Day. | Matters of Religion. |
| III. His Recreation. | VIII. His Discourse. |
| IV. His Meals. | IX. His Devotion. |
| V. His Nights Rest. | X. His Sufferings. |
| VI. His Carriage. | XI. His Conflicts. |
| | XII. His Death. |



D U B L I N :

Printed for THOMAS WATSON, Bookseller, at the Poets
Heads in *Caple-street*. M DCC LV.

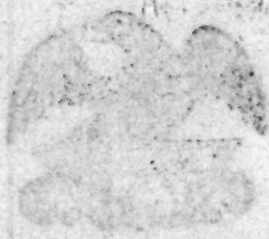
Printed and Published by

JOHN

THE CHRISTIAN

OF THE

OF THE



PRINTED BY

An Exhortatory

P R E F A C E

T O T H E

C H R I S T I A N R E A D E R.

OUT of infallible rules and long experience have I gathered up this true character of a Christian: A labour (some will think) might have been well spared. Every man professes both to know and act this part; who is there that would not be angry, if but a question should be made either of his skill, or interest? Surely since the first name given at Antioch, all the believing world hath been ambitious of the honour of it; how happy were it, if all that were willing to wear the livery, were as ready to do the service? but it falls out here, as in the case of all things that are at once honourable and difficult, every one affects the title, few labour for the truth of the achievement. Having therefore leisure enough to look about me, and finding the world too prone to this worst kind of hypocrisy, I have made this true draught, not more for direction, than for trial. Let no man view these lines as a stranger; but when he looks in this glass, let him ask his heart whether this be his own face; yea, rather when he sees this face, let him examine his heart whether both of them agree with their pattern. And where he finds his failings, (as who shall not?) let him strive to mend them; and never give over, whilst he is any way less fair than his copy.

In the mean time, I would it were less easy, by these rules, to judge even of others besides ourselves; or, that it were uncharitable to say, there are many Professors, few Christians; if words and forms might carry it, Christ would have clients enough: but if holiness of disposition, and uprightness of carriage must be the proof, woe is me;

In the midst of the Land, among the people, there is as the shaking of an Olive tree, and as the gleaning Grapes when the Vintage is done. *Esaïas xxiv. 13.* For where is the man that hath obtained the mastery of his corrupt affections, and is the Lord of his unruly appetite? that hath his heart in heaven, whilst his living carcass is stirring here upon earth? that can see the invisible, and secretly enjoy that Saviour to whom he is spiritually united? That hath subdued his will and reason to his belief; that fears nothing but God, loves nothing but goodness, bates nothing but sin; rejoiceth in none but true blessings; whose faith triumphs over the world, whose hope is anchored in heaven; whose charity knows no less bounds than God and men; whose humility represents him as vile to himself, as he is honourable in the reputation of God; who is wise heaven-ward, however he passes with the world; who dares be no other than just, whether he win or lose; who is frugally liberal, discreetly courageous, holily temperate: who is ever a thrifty manager of his hours, so dividing the day betwixt his God, and his Vocation, that neither shall find fault with a just neglect, or an unjust partiality: whose recreations are harmless, honest, warrantable, such as may refresh nature, not debauch it: whose diet is regulated by health, not by pleasure, as one whose table shall be no altar to his belly, nor snare to his soul; who in his seasonable repose lies down and awakes with God, caring only to relieve his spirits, not to cherish sloth. Whose carriage is meek, gentle, compliant, beneficial, in whatsoever station; in Magistracy impartially just, in the Ministry conscionably faithful; in the rule of his family wisely provident, and religiously exemplary; in short, who is a discreet and loving yoke-fellow, a tender and pious parent, a dutiful and awful son, an humble and obsequious servant, an obedient and loyal subject. Whose heart is constantly settled in the main truths of the Christian Religion, so as he cannot be removed; in litigious points neither too credulous, nor too peremptory: whose discourse is such as may be meet for the expressions of a tongue that belongs to a sound, godly, and charitable heart; whose breast continually burns with the heavenly fire of an holy

P R E F A C E.

v

holy devotion ; whose painful sufferings are overcome with patience, and chearful resolutions ; whose conflicts are attended with undaunted courage, and crowned with an happy victory : Lastly, whose death is not so full of fear and anguish, as strong consolations in that Saviour, who hath overcome and sweetened it ; nor of so much dreadfulness in itself, as of joy in the present expectations of that blessed issue of a glorious immortality, which instantly succeeds it. Such is the Christian whom we do here characterize, and commend to the world both for trial and imitation ; neither know I which of these many qualifications can be missing in that soul, who lays a just claim to Christ his Redeemer. Take your hearts to task therefore, my dear brethren, into whose bands soever these lines shall come : and, as you desire to have peace at the last, ransack them thoroughly ; not contenting yourselves with a perfunctory, and fashionable oversight (which will one day leave you irremediably miserable) but so search, as those that resolve not to give over, till you find these gracious dispositions in your bosoms, which I have here described to you : so shall we be, and make each other happy in the success of our holy labours ; which the God of heaven bless in both our hands, to his own glory, and our mutual comfort in the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

4 OCT 58



THE
PORTRAITURE
OF A
True CHRISTIAN.

SECT. I.

His Disposition.

THE Christian is a man and more; an earthly Saint, an Angel cloathed in flesh; the only lawful image of his Maker and Redeemer; the abstract of God's Church on earth: a model of heaven made up of clay; the living Temple of the Holy Ghost. For his disposition, it hath in it as much of heaven, as his earth may make room for; He were not a man if he were quite free from corrupt affections; but these he masters, and keeps in with a strait hand; and if at any time they grow resty and headstrong, he breaks them with a severe discipline, and will rather punish himself, than not tame them; He checks his appetite with discreet but strong denials, and forbears

to pamper nature, lest it grow wanton and impetuous ; he walks on earth, but converses in heaven ; having his eyes fixed on the invisible, and enjoying a sweet communion with his God, and Saviour : whilst all the rest of the world sits in darkness, he lives in a perpetual light ; the heaven of heavens is open to none but him ; thither his eye pierceth, and beholds those beams of inaccessible glory, which shine in no face but his : the deep mysteries of godliness, which to the great Clerks of the world are as a book clasped and sealed up, lye open before him fair and legible ; and whilst those book-men know whom they have *heard of*, he knows whom he hath *believed* : He will not suffer his Saviour to be ever out of his eye, and if through some worldly interceptions, he lose the sight of that blessed object for a time, he zealously retrieves him, not without an angry check of his own miscarriage ; and is now so much the more fixed by his former slackness ; so as he will henceforth sooner part with his soul, than his Redeemer. The terms of entitleness wherein he stands with the Lord of life, are such as he can feel, but cannot express, though he should borrow the language of Angels : it is enough that the two are of one Spirit : His reason is willingly captivated to his faith ; his will to his reason, and his affections to both : He fears nothing that he sees in comparison of that which he sees not ; and displeasure is more dreadful to him than smart : Good is the adequate object of his love ; which he duly proportions according to the degrees of its eminence ; affecting the chief good, not without a certain ravishment of spirit ; the lesser with a wise and holy moderation. Whether he do more hate sin, or the evil spirit that suggests it, is a question ; earthly contents are too mean grounds whereon to raise his joy : these, as he baulks not when they meet him in his way, so he doth not too eagerly pursue ; he may taste of them, but so, as he had rather *fast* than *surfeit*. He is not sensible of those losses which casualty, or enmity may inflict ; but that which
lies

lies most heavily upon his heart, is his sin : This makes his sleep short and troublesome, his meals stomachless, his recreations listless, his every thing tedious, till he find his soul acquitted by his great Surety in heaven : which done, he feels more peace and pleasure in his calm, than he found horror in the tempest. His heart is the store-house of most precious graces : That faith whereby his soul is established, triumphs over the world, whether it allure, or threaten; and bids defiance to all the powers of darkness ; not fearing to be foiled by any opposition : His hope cannot be discouraged with the greatest difficulties ; but bears up against natural impossibilities, and knows how to reconcile contradictions : His charity is both extensive, and fervent, barring out no one that bears the face of a man ; but pouring out itself upon the household of faith ; that studying good constructions of men and actions, and keeping itself free both from suspicion and censure. Grace doth more exalt him, than his humility depresses him : were it not for that Christ who dwells in him, he could not but think himself the meanest of all creatures ; now, he knows he may not disparage the Deity of him, by whom he is so gloriously inhabited ; in whose only right he can be as great in his own thoughts, as he is despicable in the eyes of the world. He is wise to Godward, however it be with him for the world ; and well-knowing he cannot serve two masters, he cleaves to the better, making choice of that ~~good~~ part which cannot be taken from him ; not so much regarding to get that which he cannot keep, as to possess himself of that good which he cannot lose. He is just in all his dealings with men ; hating to thrive by injury and oppression : and will rather leave behind something of his own, than filch from another's heap. He is not close handed, where there is just occasion for his distribution ; willingly parting with those metals which he regards only for use, not caring for either their colour or substance : earth is to him no other than itself, in what hue soever it appeareth. In every good

good cause he is bold as a Lion, and can neither fear faces, nor shrink at dangers: and is rather heartened with opposition, pressing so much the more where he finds a large door open, and many adversaries; and when he must suffer, doth as resolutely stoop, as he did before valiantly resist. He is holily temperate in the use of all God's blessings, as knowing by whom they are given, and to what end; neither dares either to mis-lay them, or to mispend them lavishly: as duly weighing upon what terms he receives them, and fore-expecting an account. Such an hand doth he carry upon his pleasures and delights, that they run not away with him; he knows how to slacken the reins without a debauched kind of dissoluteness, and how to straiten them without a fullen rigour.

S E C T. II.

His expence of the day.

HE lives as a man that hath borrowed his time, and challenges not to be owner of it; caring to spend the day in a gracious and well-governed thrift: His first morning talk, after he hath lifted up his heart to that God who gives his beloved sleep, shall be to put himself in a due posture, wherein to entertain himself and the whole day: which shall be done, if he shall effectually work his thoughts to a right apprehension of his God, of himself, of all that may concern him. The true posture of a Christian then, is this; He sees still heaven open to him, and beholds and admires the light inaccessible; he sees the all-glorious God ever before him; the angels of God about him; the evil spirits aloof off, enviously groaning, and repining at him; the world under his feet, willing to rebel, but forced to be subject; the good creatures ready to render their service to him; and he is accordingly affected to all these: he sees heaven open with joy and desire of fruition; he sees God with an adoring awfulness;

awfulness ; he sees the angels with a thankful acknowledgment, and care not to offend them ; he sees the evil spirits with hatred and watchful indignation ; he sees the world with an holy imperiousness, commanding it for use, and scorning to stoop to it for observance : lastly, he sees the good creatures, with gratulation and care to improve them to the advantage of him that lent them.

Having thus gathered up his thoughts, and found where he is, he may now be fit for his constant devotion ; which he falls upon, not without a trembling veneration of that infinite and incomprehensible Majesty, before whom he is prostrate ; now he climbs up into that heaven, which he before did but behold ; and solemnly pours out his soul in hearty thanksgivings, and humble supplications into the bosom of the Almighty ; wherein his awe is so tempered with his faith, that whilst he labours under the sense of his own vileness, he is raised up in the confidence of an infinite mercy : now he renews his feeling interest in the Lord Jesus Christ his blessed Redeemer, and labours to get in every breath new pledges of his gracious entireness, so seasoning his heart with these early thoughts of Piety, as that they stick by him all the day after.

Having thus begun with his God, and begg'd his blessing, he now finds time to address himself to the works of his Calling ; to live without any vocation, to live in an unwarrantable vocation, not to labour in the vocation wherein he lives, are things which his soul hateth : these businesses of his Calling therefore he follows with a willing and contented industry, not as forced to it by the necessity of human laws, or as urged by the law of necessity, out of the sense or fear of want ; nor yet contrarily, out of an eager desire of enriching himself in his estate, but in a conscionable obedience to that God who hath made man to labour as the sparks to fly upward, and hath laid it upon him both as a punishment and charge, *In the sweat of thy brows shalt thou eat thy bread.* In an humble alacrity he walks on
in.

in the way wherein his God hath set him, yet not the while so intent upon his hands, as not to tend his heart; which he lifts up in frequent ejaculations to that God, to whom he desires to be approved in all his endeavours; ascribing all the thanks both of his ability and success to that omnipotent hand: if he meet with any rubs of difficulty in his way, he knows who sent them, and who can remove them; not neglecting any prudential means of remedy, he is not to seek for an higher redress.

If he have occasion for trading with others, his will may not be the rule of his gain, but his conscience; neither dares he strive for what he can get, but what he ought: equity is here the clerk of the market, and the measure which he would have others mete out to himself, is the standard whereby he desires to be tried in his mensurations to all other. He hates to raise prices upon occasion of his neighbours need, and to take the advantage of forfeits. He is not such a slave to his trade, as not to spare an hour to his soul, neither dares he be so lavish as utterly to neglect his charge, upon whatever pretence of pleasure or devotion: in short, he takes his work at the hand of God, and leaves it with him, humbly offering up his services to his great Master in Heaven; and after all his labour sits comfortably down in the conscience of having faithfully done his task, though not without the intervention of many infirmities.

S E C T. III.

His Recreations.

HIS Recreations (for even these human frailty will sometimes call for) are such as may be meet relaxations to a mind over-bent, and a body tired with honest and holy employments, safe, inoffensive, and for time and measure fitly proportioned to the occasion; like unto soft music betwixt two long and stirring acts, like unto

unto a sweet sleep after an overwatching: He is far from those delights that may effeminate or corrupt the mind, abhorring to sit by those pleasures, from which he shall not rise better: He hates to turn pastime into trade, not abiding to spend more time in whetting than till his edge be sharp; in the height of his defections he knows how to enjoy God, from whom as he fetches his allowance, so he begs and expects a gracious acceptance, even when he lets himself most loose. And if at any time he have gone beyond his measure, he chides himself for the excess, and is so much the more careful ever after to keep within compass. He can only make a kind use of those contentments, wherein light minds are transported; and can manage his disports without passion, and leave a loser without regret. A smile to him is as much as a loud laughter to the Worldling; neither doth he entertain mirth as his ordinary attendant, but as his retainer to wait upon his serious occasions: And finally, *he so rejoiceth as if he rejoiced not.*

S E C T. IV.

His Meals.

HIS Meals are such as Nature require and Grace moderates, [not pinching himself] with a penurious niggardliness, nor pampering himself with a wanton excess: His palate is the least part of his care, so as his fare may be wholesome he stands not upon delicacy. He dares not put his hand to the dish till he have look'd up to the owner, and hates to put one morsel into his mouth unblest, and knows it his duty to give thanks for what he hath paid for; as well considering that neither the meat that he eats, nor the hand and mouth that receives it, nor the stomach that digests it, nor the metal that buys it, is of his own making: And now having fed his belly, not his eye, he rises from his board satisfied, not gluttied, and so employs himself

himself in his Calling, as a man not more unweildy by his repast, but more chearful, and as one that would be loth his belly should be any hindrance to his brain or to his hand.

If he shall have occasion to entertain himself and his friends more liberally, he dares not lose himself and his feast ; he can be soberly merry and wisely free, only in this he is willing not to be his own man, in that he gives himself for the time to his guests. His Caterer is friendly thrift, and Temperance keeps the boards, and carves to every one the best measure enough : as for his own diet, when he is invited to a tempting variety, he puts his knife to his throat ; neither dares he feed without fear, as knowing who overlooks him : Obscenity, Detraction, Scurrility are barred from his table ; neither do any words sound there that are less pleasing than the dishes. Lastly, he so feeds as if he fought for health in those viands, and not pleasure ; as if he did eat to live ; and rises not more replenished with food, than with gratitude.

S E C T. V.

His Nights Rest.

IN a due season he goes to his rest ; he presumes not to alter the ordinance of day and night, nor dares confound, where distinction is made by his Maker ; it is not with him as with the brute creatures, that have nothing to look after but the meer obedience of nature ; he doth not therefore lay himself down as the swine in the stie, or a dog in the kennel, without any further preface to his desired sleep, but improves those faculties which he is now closing up to a meet preparation for an holy repose ; for which purpose he first casts back his eye to the now expired day, and seriously considers how he hath spent it ; and will be sure to make his reckonings even with his God before he part. Then he lifts up his eyes and his heart

to

to that God who hath made the night for man to rest in, and recommends himself earnestly to his blessed protection; and then closeth his eyes in peace, not without a serious meditation of his last rest; his Bed represents to him his Grave, his Linen his Winding-sheet, his Sleep Death, the Night the many days of Darkness; and shortly, he so composeth his soul, as if he lookt not to wake till the morning of the resurrection: after which, if he sleep, he is thankfully chearful; if he sleep not, his reins chasten and instruct him in the night season; and if sleep be out of his eyes, yet God and his Angels are not: whensoever he awakes, in those hands he finds himself, and therefore rests sweetly even when he sleeps not. His dreams however vain, or troublesome, are not to him altogether unprofitable; for they serve to discover not only his bodily temper, but his spiritual weakness, which his waking resolutions shall endeavour to correct.

He applies himself to his pillow, as a man that meant not to be drowned in sleep, but refreshed; not limiting his rest by the insatiable lust of a sluggish and drowzy stupidity, but by the exigence of his health, and habilitation to his calling; and rises from it (not too late) with more appetite to his work than to a second slumber; chearfully devoting the strength renewed by his late rest, to the honour and service of the Giver.

S E C T. VI.

His Carriage.

HIS Carriage is not strange, insolent, surly overbearing, and contemptuous, but familiarly meek, humble, courteous: as knowing what mould he is made of, and not knowing any worse man than himself. He hath an hand ready upon every occasion to be helpful to his neighbour; as if he thought himself made to do good. He hates to sell his breath to his friend, where his advice may be useful; neither is more ambitious of
any

any thing under heaven, than of doing good offices. It is his happiness if he can reconcile quarrels, and make peace between dissenting friends. When he is chosen an umpire, he will be sure to deal evenly betwixt both parties; and commonly displeaseth both, that he may wrong neither. If he be called forth to magistracy, he puts off all private interests, and commands friendship to give place to justice: now he knows no cousins, no enemies; neither cousins for favour, nor enemies for revenge, but looks forward to the cause, without squinting aside to the persons. No flattery can keep him from brow-beating of vice; no fear can work him to discourage virtue. Where severity is requisite, he hates to enjoy another's punishment; and where mercy may be more prevalent, he hates to use severity. Power doth not render him imperious and oppressive, but rather humbles him in the awful expectation of his account.

If he be called to the honour of God's embassy to the people, he dares not but be faithful in delivering that sacred message; he cannot now either fear faces, or respect persons: it is equally odious to him to hide and smother any of God's council, and to foist in any of his own; to suppress truth, and to adulterate it. He speaks not himself, but Christ, and labours not to tickle the ear, but to save souls: so doth he go before his flock, as one that means to feed them no less by his example, than by his doctrine; and would condemn himself if he did not *live* the gospel as well as preach it. He is neither too austere in his retiredness, nor too loose in his sociableness; but carries so even an hand, that his discreet affableness may be free from contempt, and that he may win his people with a pleasing conversation. If any of his charge be miscarried into an error of opinion, he labours to reclaim him by the spirit of meekness; so as the mis-guided may perceive nothing but love in his zealous conviction. If any be drawn into a vicious course of life, he fetches him back with a gentle, yet powerful hand, by an holy opportunity,

tunity, bringing the offender to a sense of his own danger, and to a saving penitence.

Is he the master of a family? he dares not be a lion in his own house, cruelly tyrannizing over his meanest drudge: but so moderately exercises his power, as knowing himself to be his apprentices fellow-servant. He is the mouth of his family to God, in his daily devotions; offering up for them the praise of his lips, in his morning and evening sacrifice; and the mouth of God unto them in his useful instructions, and all-holy admonitions. He sets before them a good example of piety and holy conversation, and so governs, as one that hath more than meer bodies committed to his charge.

Is he the husband of a wife? he bears his yoke even; not laying too much weight upon the weaker neck. His *helper* argues him the principal, and he so knows it, that he makes a wife use of his inequality: so remembering himself to be the superior, as that he can be no other than one flesh. He maintains therefore his moderate authority with a conjugal love, so supporting the right of his sex, that in the mean time he doth not violently clash with the brittle vessel. As his choice was not made by weight of gold, or by the hue of the skin, but for affection grounded upon virtue, so the same regards hold him to a constant continuance of chaste love, which can never yield either to change or intermission.

Is he a father of children? he looks upon them as more God's than his own, and governs them accordingly: he knows it is only their worst part which they have received from him, their diviner half is from the Father of lights, and is now become the main part of his charge. As God gave them to him, and to the world by him: so his chief care is, that they may be begotten again to God; that they may put off that corrupt nature which they took from him, and be made partakers of that divine nature which is given them in their generation. For this cause he trains them up in all virtuous and religious education: he sets them in

their way, corrects their exorbitances, restrains their wild desires, and labours to frame them to all holy dispositions ; and so bestows his fatherly care upon, and for them, as one that had rather they should be good, than rich, and would wish them rather dead, than debauched : he neglects not all honest means of their provision, but the highest point he aims at, is to leave God their patrimony. In the choice of their calling, or match, he propounds, but forces not, as knowing they have also wills of their own, which it is fitter for him to bow, than to break. Is he a son ? he is such as may be fit to proceed from such a Parent.

Is he a servant ? he cannot but be officious : for he must please two masters, though one *under*, not *against* the other ; when his visible master sees him not, he knows he cannot be out of the eye of the invisible ; and therefore dares not be either negligent, or unfaithful. The work that he undertakes, he goes through, not out of fear, but out of conscience, and would do his business no otherwise than well, though he served a blind master ; he is no blab of the defects at home, and where he cannot defend, is ready to excuse : he yields patiently to a just reproof, and answers with an humble silence : and is more careful not to deserve, than to avoid stripes.

Is he a subject ? he is awfully affected to sovereignty, as knowing by whom the powers are ordained ; he dares not curse the king, no not in his thought ; nor revile the ruler of his people, though justly faulty : much less dare he slander the footsteps of God's appointed. He submits not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, to every ordinance of God ; yea to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : not daring to disobey in regard to the oath of God : If he have reached forth his hand to cut off but the skirt of the royal robe, his heart smites him. He is a true pay-master, and willingly renders tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, honour to whom honour is due, and justly divides his duties betwixt God and *Cæsar*.

Finally,

Finally, in what ever relation he stands, he is diligent, faithful, conscionable, observant of his rule, and careful to be approved such, both to God and men.

S E C T. VII.

His Resolution in Matters of Religion.

HE hath fully informed himself of all the necessary points of religion; and is so firmly grounded in those fundamental and saving truths, that he cannot be carried about with every wind of doctrine; as for collateral and immaterial verities, he neither despiseth, nor yet doth too eagerly pursue them; he lists not to take opinions upon trust, neither dares absolutely follow any guide, but those who he knows could not err: he is ever suspicious of new faces of theological truths; and cannot think it safe to walk in untrodden paths: matters of speculation are not unwelcome to him; but his chief care is to reduce his knowledge to practice, and therefore he holds nothing his own, but what his heart hath appropriated, and his life acted: he dares not be too much wedded to his own conceit; and hath so much humility, as to think the whole Church of Christ upon earth wiser than himself; however he be a great lover of constancy, yet upon better reason he can change his mind in some litigious, and unimportant truths, and can be silent where he must dissent.

S E C T. VIII.

His Discourse.

HIS discourse is discreet, pertinent, free from vanity, free from offence; in secular occasions nothing is spoke by him but seasonable and well-advised truths, in spiritual his speech is such as both

argues grace and works, good nature, good sense and truth, and in his speech no slanderous detraction, insulting wit or severe repetitions, tire the hearers, no obscene ill mannered jest.

His speech is seasonable fitted to the occasion, no jiggs at funerals, nor lamentations at feasts; no discouragements to the dejected, and applauses to the profane; he knows how to reserve his thoughts by locking them up in his bosom under a safe silence, he remembers that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, he meddleth not with other mens matters, much less with affairs of state, but keeps himself wisely within his own compass, not thinking his breath well spent, where he doth not either teach or learn.

S E C T. IX.

His Devotion.

HE is so perpetually resident in heaven, that he is often every day before the throne of Grace; and he never comes there without supplication in his hand; wherein also he loves to be importunate, and he speeds accordingly, for he never departs empty; while other cold suiters, that come thither but in some good fits of devotion, obtain nothing but denials: he dares not press to God's foot-stool in his own name, (he is conscious enough of his own unworthiness) but he comes in the gracious and powerful name of his righteous Mediator, in whom he knows he cannot but be accepted, and in an humble boldness for his only sake craves mercy; no man is either more awful or more confident: when he hath put up his petition to the king of heaven, he presumes not to stint the time or manner of God's condescension, but patiently and faithfully waits for the good hour, and leaves himself upon that infinite wisdom and goodness. He doth not affect length so much as fervor, neither so much minds his tongue as his heart.

His

His prayers are suited according to the degrees of the benefits sued for; he therefore begs *grace* absolutely, and *temporal* blessings with limitation, and is accordingly affected in the grant; neither is he more earnest in craving mercies, than he is zealously desirous to be retributory to God when he hath received them; not more heartily suing to be rich in grace, than to improve his graces to the honour and advantage of the bestower: with an awful and broken heart doth he make his addressees to that infinite Majesty, from whose presence he returns with comfort and joy: his soul is constantly fixed there whither he pours it out; distraction and distrust are shut out from his closet, and he is so taken up with his devotion, as one that makes it his work to pray: and when he hath offered up his sacrifices unto God, his faith listens and looks in at the door of heaven to know how they are taken.

S E C T. X.

His Sufferings.

EVery man shews fair in prosperity, but the main tryal of the christian is in suffering; any man may steer in a good gale and clear sea, but the mariner's skill will be seen in a tempest: herein the christian goes beyond the pagan's, not practice only, but admiration: *We rejoyce in tribulation*, saith St. Paul; lo here a point transcending all the affectation of heathenism. Perhaps some resolute spirit, whether out of a natural fortitude, or out of ambition of fame or earthly glory, may pretend patient enduring of loss or pain, but never any of those heroick Gentiles durst pretend to a joy in suffering: hither can Christian courage reach, knowing that *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.*

Is he deprived of his goods and worldly estate? he pleases himself in the conscience of a better treasure
that

that can never be lost. Is he afflicted with sickness? his comfort is, that the inward man is so much more renewed daily as the outward perisheth. Is he slandered and unjustly disgraced? his comfort is, that there is a blessing which will more than make him amends. Is he banished? he knows he is on his way home-ward. Is he imprisoned? his spirit cannot be lockt in, God and his Angels cannot be lockt out. Is he dying? to him *to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Is he dead? *he rests from his labours, and is crowned with glory.* in short, he is perfect gold, that comes more pure out of the fire than it went in; neither had he ever been so great a saint in heaven, if he had not passed through the flames of his tryal here upon earth.

S E C T. XL.

His Conflicts.

HE knows himself never out of danger, and therefore stands ever upon his guard; neither of his hands are empty, the one holds out the shield of faith, the other manageth the sword of the spirit, both of them are employed in his perpetual conflict. He cannot be weary of resisting, but resolves to die fighting; he hath a ward for every blow, and as his eye is quick to discern temptations, so is his hand and foot nimble to avoid them: he cannot be discouraged with either the number or power of his enemies, knowing that his strength is out of himself, in him in whom he can do all things, and that there can be no match for the Almighty: he is careful not to give advantage to his vigilant adversary, and therefore carefully avoids the occasions of sin; and if at any time he be overtaken with the suddenness or subtilty of temptation, he speedily recovers himself by a serious repentance, and fights so much the harder because of his soil: he hates to take quarter of the spiritual powers, nothing less than death can put an end to his quarrel, nothing below victory.

S E C T.

S E C T. XII.

His Death.

HE is not so careful to keep his soul within his body, as to send it forth well addressed for happiness; as knowing therefore the last tryal to be most violent, he rouzeth up his holy fortitude to encounter that king of fear, his last enemy death; and now after a painful sickness, and a resolute expectation of the fiercest assault, it appears to him as in the meeting of the two hostile brothers, *Jacob* and *Esau*, instead of grappling he finds a courteous salutation, for stabs, kisses, for height of enmity, offices of love; life could never befriend him so much as death offers to do; that tenders him (perhaps a rough, but) a sure hand to lead him to glory, and receives a welcome accordingly: neither is there any cause to wonder at the change; the Lord of life hath wrought it, he having by dying subdued death, hath reconciled it to his own, and hath (as it were) beaten it into these fair terms with all the members of his mystical body; so as whilst unto the enemies of God, death is still no other than a terrible executioner of divine vengeance, he is to all that are in Christ a delightful and sure convoy unto blessedness: The Christian therefore now laid upon his last bed, when this grim messenger comes to fetch him to heaven, looks not so much at his dreadful visage as at his happy errand; and is willing not to remember what death is in itself, but what it is to us in Christ, by whom it is made so useful and beneficial, that we could not be happy without it. Here then comes in the last act and imployment of faith, (for after this brunt passed, there is no more use of faith but of vision) that heartens the soul in a lively apprehension of that blessed Saviour, who both led him the way of suffering, and is making way for him to everlasting glory: that shews him Jesus the author and
finisher

finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: that clings close unto him, and lays unremoveable hold upon his person, his merits, his blessedness; upon the wings of this faith is the soul ready to mount up toward that heaven which is open to receive it, and in that act of evolation puts itself into the hands of those blessed angels, who are ready to carry it up to the throne of glory.

FINIS.

4 OC 58

